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THE CRAFTSMAN

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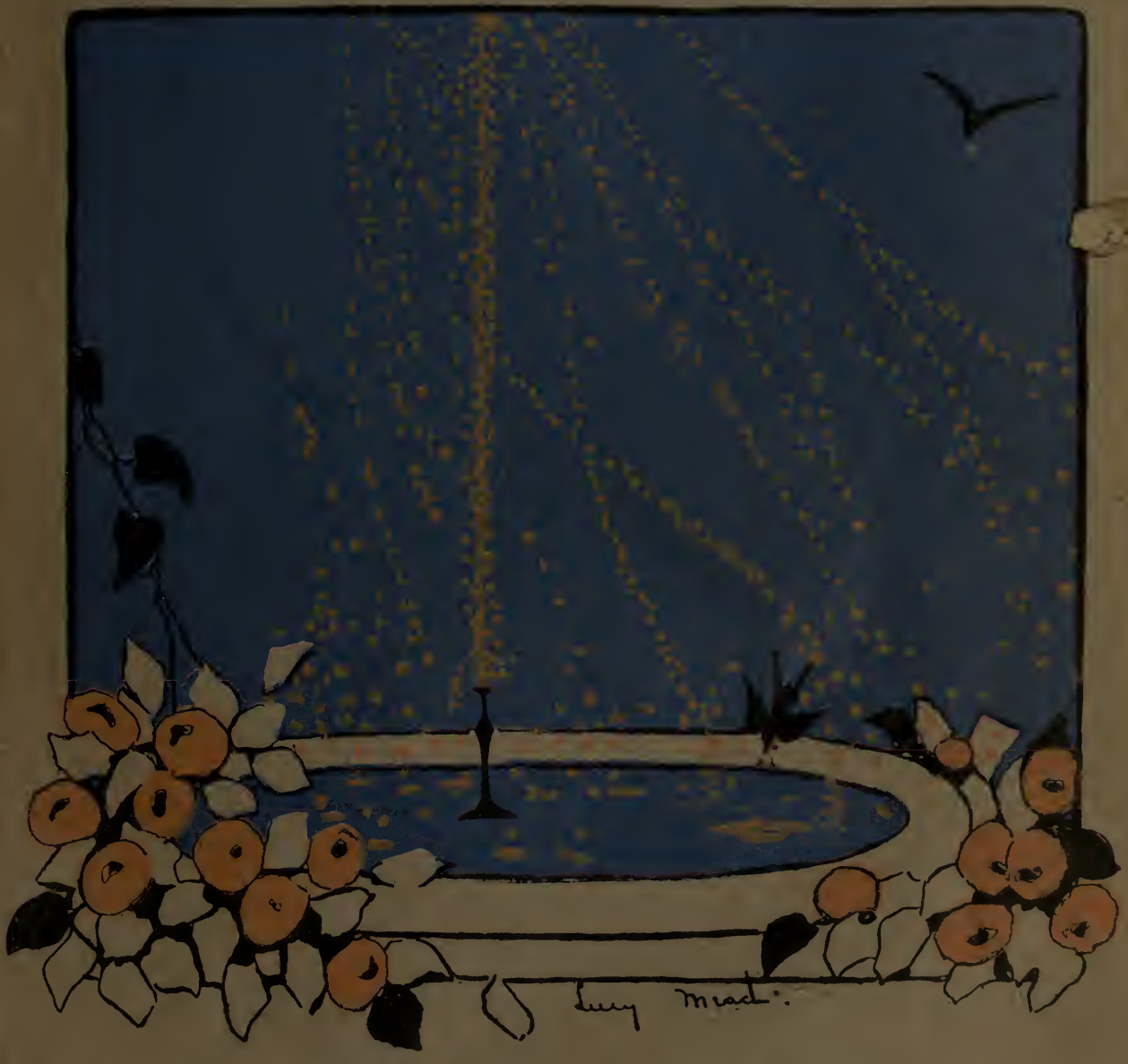

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Contents for July, 1916

THE OLD MILL . . . . . *Frontispiece*
IS THERE A NATIONAL SPIRIT IN "THE NEW POETRY" OF AMERICA? . . . . . *By Amy Lowell* 339
SUBTLE STUDIES OF HUMAN EMOTION SHOWN IN THE SCULPTURE OF CHESTER BEACH 350
Illustrated
THE ART OF GARDEN MAKING: Illustrated by Scenes from One of "Vitale's Gardens" 356
BROADWAY'S CANYON: A POEM . . . *By John Gould Fletcher* 364
THE AMERICAN GIRL'S EDUCATION NOT HUMAN ENOUGH: Madame Guilbert Suggests a Remedy 365
Illustrated
NEW HOPI ARCHITECTURE OF THE OLD MESA LAND . . . 374
Illustrated
THE VANISHING RED: A POEM . . . . *By Robert Frost* 383
THE BEAUTIFUL GARDENS OF OUR GREAT WESTERN DESERTS . 384
Illustrated
NEW TYPES OF SMALL HOUSES THAT COMBINE BEAUTY AND EFFICIENCY 392
Illustrated
THE LAUGHTERS: A POEM . . . . *By Louis Untermeyer* 396
GARDEN GATES AND ENTRANCES . . . *By E. I. Farrington* 398
Illustrated
COOL TOMBS: A POEM . . . . . *By Carl Sandburg* 405
THE OLD MILL . . . . . *By John Mätter* 406
WINTER'S TURNING: A POEM . . . . . *By Amy Lowell* 407
A NEW TYPE OF FURNITURE: Elegant in Design and Rich in Color . . 408
Illustrated
AMONG THE CRAFTSMEN:
Craftsman Town and Country Houses: Two New Designs 412
Illustrated
A House of Seven Fireplaces: From Craftsman Inspiration 418
Illustrated
A Porch of Charm and Fragrance . . . . *By Albert Marple* 424
Illustrated
An All-Cement Chicken House . . . . . *By Albert Marple* 425
Illustrated
Book Reviews 426
Four Popular Craftsman Houses 429
Illustrated

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THE VANISHING RED: BY ROBERT FROST

HE is said to have been the last Red Man
In Acton. And the Miller is said to have laughed—
If you like to call such a sound a laugh.
But he gave no one else a laugher's license.
For he turned suddenly grave as if to say,
"Whose business, if I take it on myself,
Whose business—but why talk round the barn?—
When it's just that I hold with getting a thing done with."
You can't get back and see it as he saw it.
It's too long a story to go into now.
You'd have to have been there and lived it.
Then you wouldn't have looked on it as just a matter
Of who began it between the two races.

Some guttural exclamation of surprise
The Red Man gave in poking about the mill
Over the great big thumping, shuffling millstone
Disgusted the Miller physically as coming
From a person who the less he attracted
Attention to himself you would have thought the better.
"Come, John," he said, "you want to see the wheel pit?"
He took him down below a cramping rafter
And showed him through a manhole in the floor
The water in desperate straits like frantic fish
Salmon and sturgeon lashing with their tails,
Then he shut down the trap door with a ring in it
That jangled even above the general noise,
And came upstairs alone—and gave that laugh
And said something to a man with a meal-sack
That the man with the meal-sack didn't catch—then,
Oh yes, he showed John the wheel pit all right!

The place was Acton Mass a hundred or more years ago. This is not intended for any kind of verse. It wanted to scan but I refused to let it. R.F. 1945

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